

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in a Special Meeting on Thursday, September 15, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the utilization of the property known as the old Banner Elk School for the purpose of economic development by the solicitation of information from the Avery County Economic Director, educators, government officials and private citizens.

Members Present: Kenny Poteat, Chairman; Phyllis Forbes, Vice-Chair; Scott Heath; Martha Hicks; Glenn Johnson

Members Absent: None

**Call To Order**

Chairman Poteat called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.  
Scott Heath led prayer.  
Chairman Poteat read aloud the notice for the special meeting.

Robert Wiseman, County Manager, explained that this meeting was not to discuss the disposition, value or anything else as it relates to the old Banner Elk School. The old Banner Elk School has been declared surplus but Avery County does not have the title to the property at this point. This is an informational meeting to let Bret Gardella, Avery County Economic Development Director, explain in detail the economic development proposal for the old Banner Elk School.

**Avery County Professional & Retail Incubator Development Enterprise (A.C. P.R.I.D.E.)**

Bret Gardella, Avery County Economic Development Director, presented to the Board the proposal for the old Banner Elk School. Mr. Gardella stated that it was imperative for Avery County to move forward by being aggressive and innovative and not be afraid to take calculated risks. With the creation of P.R.I.D.E., Avery County will be established not only as one that verbally supports entrepreneurship and small business but one whose actions demonstrate support. This will put Avery County in the forefront of job creation by helping those business owners get into business and grow their business. Mr. Gardella explained the advantages of P.R.I.D.E. and also the challenges.

John LaCapra, Lees McRae College Business Professor; John Boyd, Mayland Community College President; David Burleson, Superintendent of Avery County Schools; and Tommy Burleson, Avery County Planning and Inspections Director all spoke in favor of the Avery County P.R.I.D.E. proposal for the old Banner Elk School.

There was discussion regarding this proposal.

**Adjourn**

**Motion by Scott Heath and second by Phyllis Forbes to adjourn this meeting at 5:20 p.m. Motion unanimously approved.**

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**Kenny Poteat, Chairman  
Avery County Board of Commissioners**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk